

## WHY MARRIED LIFE IS DULL.

Dorothy Dix in New York American-Journal.

Marriage, as we see it illustrated in everyday life, is generally a failure.

It brings happiness to the very few, misery and disenchantment to the many.

It is a dull plain of dreary monotony, stretching from the altar to the grave, on which love yawns itself to death as soon as the honeymoon is over.

There is never the slightest difficulty in picking out any married couple in a public assemblage.

If on the street you see a man walking about two feet ahead of his wife and letting her drag along as best she may over the crossings, you know the woman is his wife.

If at the theatre you see a couple sitting up between the acts in frozen silence, or reading the jokes in the back of the programme, you know they are husband and wife.

If you hear a woman tell a story and a man sarcastically observes that he heard that anecdote in the Ark during the Flood, you know the gentleman is the lady's husband.

If you see a couple treat each other with an absolute disregard of every canon of decent social intercourse, you do not have to be a Sherlock Holmes to deduce the fact that they are married.

Now, nobody marries to achieve this kind of fate. Every youth and maiden believe that the wedding ring is the circle that bounds paradise, and when they marry they expect to be perfectly happy.

They see that other married people are bored and weary and disgruntled, but that does not deter them from taking the fatal step, for marriage may be best described as the final triumph of hope over other people's experience.

The most terrible thing in the world is the disillusionment of matrimony, and that the tie which is the closest and the holiest bond that can be forged between two human beings, in the majority of cases, becomes merely a ball and chain that fetters them together like prisoners, and that you can hear clank as they walk.

Why is it that a man and woman who have sacrificed everything for the privilege of each other's society begin to gape in each other's faces the minute they find themselves vis-a-vis across their own hearthstone?

If marriages were arranged by the parents, as in Europe, or if people generally married for money or position, one could understand why matrimony from the point of view of promoting happiness is so often a failure.

Marriages, however, in this country at least, are almost universally love matches and it is a cynical commentary on the brevity of affection that the country that leads the world in love matches also leads the world in the number of divorces.

But it is not of divorce I would speak here.

The acutely miserable marriage generally finds its own cure.

The average married couple's sufferings are not active.

They are merely the dull ache of disappointment, of a romance that has turned to prose, of an unsatisfied longing for something they wanted and never got.

Yet these people were once in love with each other; they once idealized each other; they once entranced each other.

They married in order that they might spend their lives together; and the greatest problem of civilization is why, when they started out with so much material for happiness, they so soon came to bankruptcy.

It is easy to say that the reason nobody realizes a lover's paradise is because lovers expect too much.

No couple could keep keyed up to the high C pitch of sentiment of their courtship days.

No woman can remain forever young and beautiful, nor can any man really enjoy holding a lily-white hand for 40 years at a stretch.

It is a blow to a young couple to find out that they have got to live in a world that is full of bills, and cooks, and sickness, and cookbooks, and kisses, but even this does not account for the decline and falling of domestic happiness.

All life is different from the way we imagined it, but it is only married life that bores us.

ers' paste and sauce Hollandaise is that one comes in a bucket and the other is served in a china dish.

What makes a dinner of beefsteak and potatoes gay at a restaurant and dull at home?

It is the pink-shaded candle and a woman who smiles at you in one place and a sickly gas jet and a wife who nags in the other.

The earliest disillusionment of matrimony comes from women not understanding the business of making a comfortable home.

Ninety-nine times out of a hundred the very first inkling that a young man gets that marriage is a failure is when he discovers that the angel he has espoused does not know the first principle of how to run a house, and the young wife ascertains that the romantic hero of her dreams has to be fed night and morning, like the animals in a menagerie, to keep him in a good humor.

Before a man is married he thinks of possessing a home as a goal toward which to work.

He looks forward to it as a place of peace and rest where he will go to throw down the troubles of life and be soothed and comforted.

He sees himself sitting down to daintily prepared and served meals, opposite a cheerful and neatly dressed wife.

When, instead of this, he finds himself returning home at night to an ill-kept, ill-managed house, when he sits down opposite to a frowsy woman to a dinner of over-done meat and under-done bread; when, in place of the peace and rest he expected, he finds that he has added all of the multifarious worries of housekeeping to his own business cares, all of his ideals of marriage and home and love are shattered at one fell blow.

He has struck the up-grade of matrimony, where it is just one long, lifeless, spiritless pull.

It is to be the everlasting disgrace of woman that it is her hand that oftenest first plucks the illusion from matrimony.

To woman this is a sordid view of a romantic subject, and the thing that they never can forgive man is that he can't be satisfied to live on love and soda crackers.

They forget that sentiment is the outcome of a full stomach.

Nobody ever felt like making love when he was hungry.

No man was ever romantic when he was uncomfortable.

There are times when dinner is bound to take the precedence over kisses.

These are sad facts, but they are facts nevertheless.

Doubtless a man ought to be able to see his wife through the eyes of affection that she will look as much like an angel to him in a slouchy dressing jacket as she does in dainty chiffons.

Doubtless he ought to be able to eat leathery pie and watery potatoes and love her still, and bless heaven for having bestowed a treasure upon him.

Doubtless he ought to look forward with joy to returning home at night after his hard day's work and help get the dinner.

Doubtless he ought to find it enchanting to spend his evenings listening to his wife's tales of the domestic mishaps of the day and of what a martyr she is.

The only trouble is he doesn't.

This isn't what he married her for.

It turns love's young dream into a nightmare.

It changes what ought to be a picnic into a dull, dreary, deadly level grind.

And this is all that only too many men ever know of married life, for there are plenty of men who never eat a good meal or spend one peaceful and happy hour in their own homes.

Every woman who marries faces the question of the kind of a home she will make, and decides it.

She can always keep the glamour of poetry and romance about it, or she can make it as bald and prosaic and monotonous and uninteresting as an alkali desert.

She can make it a place that is the most loved spot on earth to a man, or the one that fills him with the greatest sense of weariness and repulsion—a place to fly to, or one to fly away from.

Of course to make a home that is always full of charm takes work and thought, but it is worth the price.

For a woman not to succeed in that is for her to be a failure as a woman.

It may be a woman's misfortune never to be loved and married, but once to have been loved and married

and then to lose her husband's affection is her shame.

A man does not love a woman primarily because she is a good cook and a competent manager, but if he keeps on loving her after he is married to her it is because she is.

Show me a woman's housekeeping, and I can tell you to a mathematical nicety how long she will keep her husband's love.

The first great danger of married life becoming dull consists in its being lived in unattractive and uncomfortable environment, and this is a catastrophe that every woman has it in her power to prevent if she will.

If the first snag that a young couple strikes in married life, and that jolts the romance out of matrimony, is the wife's total inability to wrestle successfully with the household problem, the second is the money question.

The first disillusion the man.

The second smashes the woman's ideals into smithereens.

Somebody—doubtless a matrimonial promoter—once announced the cheery theory that marriage was a real economy because two people can live cheaper than one, and most men are taken in by this fallacy.

They even marry on it, and when they find that it isn't true—that it takes twice as much food for two as one, and four times as much house rent, and ten times as many clothes when the other one is a woman, it gives the man a shock of surprise from which he never recovers as long as he lives.

He wasn't prepared for it.

He had expected sportive cupid to play about his pathway, and instead of that the bill collector camps upon his trail, and it makes him grumpy, not so much because he is not willing to pay as because he did not expect to have to pay.

It is sentiment with a price tag on it, and he grumbles at the price.

For the woman the disillusionment is even more complete. Nobody but a woman ever knows the agony of the hour of enlightenment when she gets the first intimation that she, and the household expenses she represents are considered a burden.

This isn't what she married for, either.

During the days of courtship the lover lavished every luxury upon her.

The husband complains at supplying her with the necessities of life.

While he wooed her he swore that he asked no greater privilege of heaven than the pleasure of providing for her. As soon as they are married he talks of having to support her.

Before they were married he delighted in bestowing gifts and treats upon her.

After they are married he scripps her on street car fare.

As a girl she had thought of the position of a wife as being one of honored independence.

When she is married she finds that she is a dependent who has her dependence continually thrown in her face.

She had pictured matrimony as an elysium in which she would be taken care of and protected from the world by a husband who would be a Prince Bountiful.

She finds it the only situation in life in which the woman has to beg for the money she earns.

Practically every wife works harder for a husband than she could be hired to work for an employer, but not one wife in a thousand gets anything for it but her board and clothes.

She has no separate allowance.

She has no money she can spend on personal gratification. Every cent must be accounted for, and when the monthly bills come in the average husband acts precisely as if she had eaten every mouthful of the food charged on the grocery and butcher bills, and had worn all of the clothes on the dry goods bills, and had absorbed every particle of the heat and light for the coal and gas bills.

Is it any wonder that married life that is set to the tune of the husband's complaint over the family expenses gets to be the dead march of a woman's soul instead of the glad, sweet song that she had expected it to be?

It is a man's attitude on the financial problem that strips the glamour from married life for women and turns it from poetry into prose, and if there were no money question in the home we should hear very little of the divorce question.

If men would state their position on the matter as candidly before marriage as they do after marriage, there would be precious few weddings.

If a man would say to a girl that if she married him she would have to ask him for every dollar, and wheedle and cajole him out of it, that every time she bought a new dress, or a new hat, she would have to endure his sarcastic comments on her extravagance, and that the arrival of the monthly bills would provoke a storm that would scare her out of her wits, the girl would say "no" every time.

She would prefer to earn her own

living in some easier and more peaceable way.

The position that men take in regard to their wives and money is the most illogical and unreasonable thing on earth. A man is not worthy of the name expectant father until he is a self-sufficient man who takes upon himself the responsibility of supporting his family.

Yet when he has to do it he does it with the groaning and moaning of a martyr. It may be that men's complaints, public and private, over what their families cost them are merely a little pleasantry to call attention to their virtues, but it is a joke that effectually spoils married life for the woman who is the object of it.

When men and women acquire enough intelligence to settle the money question before marriage instead of afterward it will do more to infuse happiness into matrimony than anything else.

No man should marry a woman until he has thoroughly familiarized himself with grocery bills and coal bills, and butchers' bills, and drug bills, and doctors' bills, and millinery bills, and dressmaking bills and all the other bills and ills to which matrimony is heir.

And no woman should marry a man until she has got an ironclad contract for a definite allowance for her own personal expenses and household needs.

There are just 30 times less friction in getting money out of a man once a month than there is in getting it from him every day.

The reason that most married couples have not time to talk sentiment is because they are haggling over money.

The source of discord has to be eliminated if the course of true love is to flow smoothly.

The third reason that married life is dull is because the curse of commercialism is upon it.

The one deathless passion of the American man is the passion for making money.

He loves his wife, but he loves his business better.

He gives one thought to how he can make her happy where he gives hours of concentrated study to trying to devise new ways of extending his trade.

He expends his amiability in jolly-ing his customers, not in paying compliments to his wife.

He exhausts his diplomacy in dealing with difficult clients, not in trying to get along harmoniously with his wife.

His witty stories, his entertaining conversation, his suavity and politeness even, are for those who can bring grist to his mill. They are too precious for home consumption.

The best of himself, in mind and manners and body, he gives to his business, and all that many a woman ever sees of her husband is a man that comes home at night with wrecked nerves and a temper that hushes the children's prattle as if they were stricken dumb, and makes the cat take to the cellar.

No woman marries to get this sort of a matrimonial bargain.

She married for a companion, not to get a patent adding machine or human cash register.

She expected to have some one to talk to, some one who would be interested in her and sympathize with her, and make her life brighter and happier for her.

She finds that she is united to a man who grunts out replies to her over his coffee and rolls in the morning because he is so busy looking over the financial column in the newspaper he has no time to talk.

As soon as breakfast is over he gives her a perfunctory peck on the cheek in place of a kiss, because his mind is too absorbed in planning the business of the day for him to realize her existence, much less to be conscious of any thrill of love or regret in parting from her.

At night he returns too tired to talk, too tired to go to any place of amusement, too spent with the efforts of the day to even think of such a thing as amusing or entertaining his wife, and with his only desire to be left undisturbed to pursue the financial edition of the evening paper, when he does not go out to meet other business men, and plan for the morrow.

If his wife dies, he regrets it, but he consoles himself by plunging deeper and deeper into business.

He does not commit suicide over her grave. He only blows out his brains when his business goes to smash.

Is it any wonder that a woman married to a man utterly absorbed in his occupation finds married life dull?

This is a mistake. Women require something more than money to make them happy. They are not willing to trade off love for a fine house, and their husband's companionship for a diamond brooch.

It is a nice, thrilling, exciting sort of existence, isn't it, for a woman to spend her days trying to make a comfortable home for a man who is too busy to notice her efforts to please him and to pass her evenings in the

society of one who is buried in a newspaper?

Of course, men say that the reason they work so hard is because it requires so much money to support their wives.

To this women may well retort that the reason that their husbands have to furnish them so much money is because they give them nothing else.

When a man is disappointed in his wife he generally takes to drink.

When a woman is disappointed in her husband she takes to extravagance.

Many a woman goes out and buys imported gowns because she feels neglected and miserable, and is trying to stifle her heart by covering it up with chiffon and velvet.

Many a woman would joyfully exchange her automobile and stables for a certainty that she could raise the same sort of a heart thrill in her husband that a five point rise in stocks does.

A man thinks that he can make a woman happy by giving her the things that money buys. Hence he has a clear conscience in absorbing himself in business as long as he lavishes luxuries upon her.

A man who wants to make his wife happy and to make married life interesting to her must put her first in his heart and his business second. If he will do that he will find that he does not have to work so hard and that it does not require so much to support a wife.

One of the chief reasons why married life is dull is because it is all work and no play in the family circle.

Dorothy Dix.

His Reference to Signs Fatal.

A favorite prank among Dartmouth students thirty years ago was the shifting of storekeepers' signs so that for example, the college treasurer would find a barber's sign over his door, the druggist would find a blacksmith's sign, and so on, says the Boston Herald.

A current tradition tells of how sophomores attempted to remove a sign one night in the late '70's and the owner who immediately gave chase. The boys escaped, but the offended owner "spotted" their room and the next morning reported them to President Smith, who at once summoned the culprits to his office where the following dialogue ensued:

"Where were you at 12 o'clock last night?" inquired the president of one.

"In my room," was the quick reply.

"What doing?"

"Reading the Bible."

"What portion of the Bible were you reading at such an hour?"

"I don't recollect the chapter."

"Can't you tell what it was about?" persisted the president; "it must have been something interesting to keep you up so late."

"All I recollect is one verse," the student replied. "A wicked and perverse generation shall seek after a sign, but no sign shall be given it," and he was suspended for three months.

War Relics Not Highly Regarded.

A Washington veteran who recently visited historic South Mountain, in Washington County, Md., found that there are many grim relics of the sanguinary battle of Antietam, and the fight of South Mountain, in the possession of farmers in that vicinity.

"The strangest part of it," said the Washington man, "is that these relics are regarded by the natives as of little value. In one place, not far from Eakle's Mill a farmer has a beautifully engraved Masonic sword which has been used as a plaything by the children of the neighborhood. The handle of the sword is of ivory carved with Masonic emblems.

"The farmer who owns this rare relic stated that his father detached it from the body of a dead Confederate officer, who, after being shot at the battle of South Mountain, crawled into the thicket to die. His remains were found there several days after the fight, when the guns of both armies were thundering along Antietam creek and about Sharpsburg.

"In another farm house a bayonet found in a clump of bushes on South Mountain is doing duty as a stove lifter, and at others are cannon balls and musket balls galore, which are thrown about as though they were of no historic value."—Washington Star.

— Good manners in a man make you feel he doesn't treat you so bad as he might, even if he robs.

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